IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 11, AMEND claims 1, 14, 16 and 20 and add new claims 21-24 in accordance with the following:

1.   (currently amended) An apparatus for providing a group purchasing service, comprising:

an identification information issuing unit that issues, upon receiving a group purchasing application request for a product from a user terminal, user identification information corresponding to the group purchasing application request; and

a product purchasing execution unit that executes, upon receiving a purchasing procedure request for a product from the user terminal with the user identification information issued, a product purchasing procedure for a user who made the purchasing procedure request, and sets the user as an object user for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information~~.~~;

an identification information storing unit that stores, upon the identification information issuing unit receiving a group purchasing application request for a product including at least a plurality of pieces of user identification information to identify a plurality of users, respectively, the user identification information of the users; and

a message transmitting unit that transmits, upon the apparatus receiving an access from a user terminal of the users with user identification information which coincides with the user identification information stored in the identification information storing unit, a message to urge the users to carry out the group purchasing, wherein

the product purchasing execution unit sets, upon receiving a product purchasing procedure request in response to the message transmitted, users who made product purchasing procedure request as object users for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information.

2.   (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the product purchasing execution unit executes, upon receiving a group purchasing procedure request for a different

kind of product based on the group purchasing with the user identification information from the user terminal, the product purchasing procedure for a user who made the group purchasing procedure request.

3.　　(original)　The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

an identification information transmitting unit that transmits the user identification information issued from the identification information issuing unit to the user terminal, wherein

the product purchasing procedure execution processor receives the product purchasing procedure request with the user identification information transmitted.

4.　　(original)　The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the identification information issuing unit receives a group purchasing application request indicating a group purchasing of a product for a predetermined number of persons from the user terminal.

5.　　(original)　The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a shipping processing request unit that makes a processing request for shipping a product to a user who uses the user terminal when the product purchasing execution unit executed the product purchasing procedure.

6.　　(original)　The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a discount amount calculating unit that calculates, after the product purchasing execution unit completes execution of the product purchasing procedure for each user, a discount amount for a product to be paid back to the user corresponding to number of the object users for the group purchasing processing; and

a discount amount output unit that outputs the discount amount calculated.

7.　　(original)　The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein

the discount amount calculating unit calculates a credit point as the discount amount, and

the discount amount output unit outputs the credit point calculated.

8. (original) The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the discount amount calculating unit calculates the discount amount based on a destination area for shipping each product.

9. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the identification information issuing unit issues a uniform resource locator of last page of either of the processing of the group purchasing application request and the purchasing procedure request.

10. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

an exclusive page creating unit that creates a website exclusive for a group carrying out the product purchasing procedure, wherein

the identification information issuing unit issues a uniform resource locator of the website created as the user identification information.

11. (canceled)

12. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising

an expiration date creating unit that creates an expiration date of the user identification information issued by the identification information issuing unit, wherein

the product purchasing execution unit sets, upon receiving the product purchasing procedure request with the user identification information, a user who made the purchasing procedure request as the object user for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information, if the expiration date of the user identification information is valid.

13. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising

a user information management unit that manages information on each user included in the product purchasing procedure request by associating the information with the group who made the group purchasing application.

14.   (currently amended) A method for providing a group purchasing service, comprising:

receiving a group purchasing application request for a product from a user terminal;

issuing user identification information corresponding to the group purchasing application request;

receiving a purchasing procedure request for a product from the user terminal with the user identification information issued;

executing a product purchasing procedure for a user who made the purchasing procedure request; ~~and~~

setting the user as an object user for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information~~.~~;

storing, upon receiving a group purchasing application request for a product including at least a plurality of pieces of user identification information to identify a plurality of users, respectively, the user identification information of the users;

transmitting, upon the apparatus receiving an access from a user terminal of the users with user identification information which coincides with the user identification information stored in the identification information storing unit, a message to the user terminal to urge the users to carry out the group purchasing; and

setting, upon receiving a product purchasing procedure request in response to the message transmitted, users who made product purchasing procedure request as object users for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information.

15.   (original) The method according to claim 14, further comprising:

transmitting the user identification information issued from the identification information issuing unit to the user terminal.

16.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 14, further comprising:

requesting a processing for shipping a product to a user who uses the user terminal when the ~~executing executed the~~ product purchasing procedure is executed.

17.   (original) The method according to claim 14, further comprising:

calculating, after execution of the product purchasing procedure for each user is completed, a discount amount for a product to be paid back to the user corresponding to number of the object users for the group purchasing processing; and

outputting the discount amount calculated.

18.   (original) The method according to claim 14, wherein the issuing includes issuing a uniform resource locator of last page of either of the processing of the group purchasing application request and the purchasing procedure request.

19.   (original) The method according to claim 14, further comprising:

creating a website exclusive for a group carrying out the product purchasing procedure, wherein

the issuing includes issuing a uniform resource locator of the website created as the user identification information.

20.   (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium that stores a computer program for realizing a group purchasing service on a computer, the computer program making a computer execute:

receiving a group purchasing application request for a product from a user terminal;

issuing user identification information corresponding to the group purchasing application request;

receiving a purchasing procedure request for a product from the user terminal with the user identification information issued;

executing a product purchasing procedure for a user who made the purchasing procedure request; and

setting the user as an object user for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information.;

storing, upon receiving a group purchasing application request for a product including at least a plurality of pieces of user identification information to identify a plurality of users, respectively, the user identification information of the users;

transmitting, upon the apparatus receiving an access from a user terminal of the users with user identification information which coincides with the user identification information stored in the identification information storing unit, a message to the user terminal to urge the users to carry out the group purchasing; and

setting, upon receiving a product purchasing procedure request in response to the message transmitted, users who made product purchasing procedure request as object users for the group purchasing processing corresponding to the user identification information.

21. (new) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the message transmitting unit transmits a message directly to the user terminals of the users, upon the apparatus receiving an access from a first user terminal of the users with user identification information which coincides with the user identification information stored in the identification information storing unit, to urge the users to carry out the group purchasing.

22. (new) The method of claim 14 wherein the transmitting is of a message directly to the user terminals of the users, upon the apparatus receiving an access from a first user terminal of the users with user identification information which coincides with the user identification information stored in the identification information storing unit, to urge the users to carry out the group purchasing.

23. (new) The computer-readable recording medium of claim 20 wherein the transmitting is of a message directly to the user terminals of the users, upon the apparatus receiving an access from a first user terminal of the users with user identification information which coincides with the user identification information stored in the identification information storing unit, to urge the users to carry out the group purchasing.

24. (new) A method for providing a group purchasing service, the method comprising:

receiving a registration request from a plurality of users associated with a group purchasing request, the users each providing user contact information;

issuing unique user identification information to the plurality of users, corresponding to the group purchasing request, in response to the registration request;

storing the unique user identification information issued and the user contact

information provided by the plurality of users;

receiving a group purchasing application for a product from one or more of the users associated with the group purchasing request, the application including one or more pieces of the user identification information to identify each of the plurality of users associated with the group purchasing request;

transmitting a message directly to each of the identified users, upon receiving the group purchasing application, to urge the identified users to carry out a group purchase, the message transmitted using the stored user contact information.